

## Message Text

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SUBJECT: MORE THOUGHTS ON BEGIN'S WEST BANK PLAN

REF: TEL AVIV 10830

SUMMARY: SUGGESTIONS FOR A "FUNCTIONAL" SOLUTION IN THE  
WEST BANK/GAZA STRIP ARE AS OLD AS THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION.  
DURING THAT PERIOD, DAYAN, PERES, AND EVEN BEGIN HAVE  
VARIOUSLY ADVOCATED SUCH FUNCTIONAL ELEMENTS AS CIVILIAN  
ADMINISTRATION OR HOME RULE, CULTURAL AUTONOMY, AND EQUAL  
RIGHTS. THE SUDDEN AND CONSPICUOUS RE-EMERGENCE OF  
FUNCTIONAL IDEAS LAST WEEK LEFT MOST LOCAL ARAB LEADERS  
NONPLUSSED, WITH ONLY GAZA'S MAYOR SHAWWA AND RAMALLAH'S  
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MAYOR KHALAF GIVING PUBLIC EXPRESSION TO THEIR NEGATIVE  
REACTION. A NUMBER OF ISRAELI ARABISTS GIVE GREAT WEHIGHT  
TO BEGIN'S APPARENT WILLINGNESS TO FOREGO AN ASSERTION  
OF ISRAELI SOVEREIGNTY IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA, ALTHOUGH  
ONE DOUBTED THAT THE ARABS WOULD APPRECIAT THE POINT.  
ANOTHER BELIEVED THAT BEGIN WOULD HAVE MORE DIFFICULTY  
IN FOREGOING HIS CLAIM TO THE WEST BANK THAN IN

ACTUALLY WITHDRAWING FROM IT. MK ELIAV, ONE OF THE FEW ISRAELI POLITICIANS EVER TO HAVE MUCH TOLERANCE FOR A PALESTINIAN STATE, THINKS THAT BEGIN AND SADAT CAN REACH A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE FORMULATION ON THE WEST BANK--EVEN IF BEGIN MUST SWEAR UP AND DOWN THAT THERE WILL BE NO PALESTINIAN STATE. END SUMMARY

1. PRELIMINARY COMMENT. SUGGESTIONS FOR A "FUNCTIONAL" SOLUTION IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES ARE AS OLD AS THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION AND WERE ORIGINATED EARLY BY MOSHE DAYAN. ALREADY IN 1968, RASHAD SHAWWA TURNED DOWN AN OFFER BY DAYAN (THEN MINISTER OF DEFENSE) TO MAKE HIM GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE GAZA STRIP UNDER AN AUTONOMOUS CIVIL ADMINISTRATION. LATER, WHEN SHIMON PERES WAS DEFENSE MINISTER IN 1974, HE FLOATED A FUNCTIONAL VARIATION WHICH WAS CALLED A PLAN FOR HOME RULE, BUT IT WAS UNCEREMONIOUSLY SHOT DOWN BY WEST BANK ARABS. (AMNON COHEN, THEN THE MILITARY GOVERNOR'S ARAB AFFAIRS ADVISER, TOLD US THAT PERES WAS SOMEWHAT LESS INSISTENT THAN DAYAN ON A JORDANIAN CONNECTION.) ALTHOUGH PRIME MINISTER BEGIN RECENTLY SAID THAT HE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF "FUNCTIONAL DIVISION" NEVERTHELESS HE HAS IN THE PAST ADVOCATED MANY OF ITS TENETS; FOR EXAMPLE, BEGIN'S HERUT PARTY CONVENTION SPEECH IN 1975 MENTIONED CULTURAL AUTONOMY, CIVIC FREEDOM, FREE CHOICE OF CITIZENSHIP AND EQUALITY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF RIGHTS "IN OUR COUNTRY" FOR THE ARABS OF ERETZ ISRAEL. THESE STANDARD IDEOLOGICAL THEMES ALSO WERE REITERATED BY BEGIN IN HIS ELECTION VICTORY SPEECH ON MAY 20 AT QADDOUM.

2. THE RATHER SUDDEN AND CONSPICUOUS RE-EMERGENCE OF FUNCTIONAL IDEAS AS GOVERNMENT POLICY LAST WEEK LEFT MOST LOCAL ARAB LEADERS NONPLUSSED. AS FAR AS WE KNOW, ONLY TWO OF THEM, GAZA'S RASHAD SHAWWA AND RAMALLAH'S KARIM KHLAF, HAVE SPOKEN ON THE SUBJECT FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD. SHAWWA'S NEGATIVE REACTION HAS BEEN PLAYED IN THE PRESS (COMMENT: SEE HIS REMARKS TO US IN SEPTTEL) AS WAS THAT OF KHALAF, WHO TOLD THE JERUSALEM POST THAT THE AUTONOMY PLAN WAS "OLD HAT". KHALAF RECALLED THAT PRO-PLO MAYORS HAD BEEN ELECTED IN THE WEST BANK ON A PLATFORM WHICH STIPULATED OPPOSITION TO "CIVIL ADMINISTRATION."

3. A NUMBER OF ISRAELI ARABISTS HAVE TOLD US THAT FOR BEGIN TO ABSTAIN FROM EXPRESSING ISRAELI SOVEREIGNTY IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA WOULD BE FOR HIM A GREAT COMPROMISE OF PRINCIPLE, ONE WHICH IN PRACTICAL TERMS WOULD

BE OF THE SAME WEIGHT AS SADAT'S VISIT TO JERUSALEM.  
THIS LINE OF REASONING WAS TAKEN BY YEHOASHUA PORATH,  
A HEBREW UNIVERSITY EXPERT IN THE HISTORY OF PALESTINIAN  
ARAB NATIONALISM, WHO WONDERED WHETHER THE ARABS WOULD  
APPRECIATE THE POINT. AMNON COHEN SAW SUCH A PROPOSAL  
BY BEGIN AS EVEN MORE DIFFICULT FOR HIM THAN ACTUALLY  
WITHDRAWING, BECAUSE "IF HE ONCE GIVES UP THAT CLAIM,  
HE CANNOT GET IT BACK." THE WHOLE POINT OF FUNCTIONAL  
IDEAS NOW, COHEN SAID, IS THAT BEGIN APPEARS WILLING TO  
AGREE ON LESS THAN ISRAELI SOVEREIGNTY (ON THE WEST  
BANK).

4. ONE OF THE FEW ISRAELI POLITICIANS EVER TO HAVE  
MUCH TOLERANCE FOR THE IDEA OF A PALESTINIAN STATE,  
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MK ARYE ELIAV (SHELL), TOLD US THAT IT MAKES A  
WORLD OF DIFFERENCE WHETHER THERE IS A FUNCTIONAL  
DIVISION WHICH SIMPLY INVOLVES ONE LAYER OF BUREAUCRACY  
STOP THE PRESENT MUNICIPALITIES ("A BANTUSTAN APPROACH  
THAT EVEN GUSH EMUNIM COULD ACCEPT") OR A FUNCTIONAL  
SOLUTION WHICH ENTAILS A COMMITMENT TO A FREE EXPRESSION  
OF SELF-DETERMINATION (MORE ACCEPTABLE TO THE ARABS).  
ELIAV SAID THAT BEGIN WILL HAVE TO DO A LOT OF  
MANEUVERING TO FIND THE RIGHT COMBINATION OF FUNCTIONAL  
ELEMENTS, BUT THAT HE AND SADAT CAN REACH A MUTUALLY  
ACCEPTABLE FORMULATION ON THE WEST BANK. THUS, BEGIN  
MAY SWEAR UP AND DOWN TO HIS LOCAL CONSTITUENCY THAT  
THERE WILL BE NO PALESTINIAN STATE AND SIMULTANEOUSLY  
PRESENT HIS PLAN TO THE REST OF THE WORLD AS A MOST  
GENEROUS RESPONSE TO SADAT. VIETS UNQTE VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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